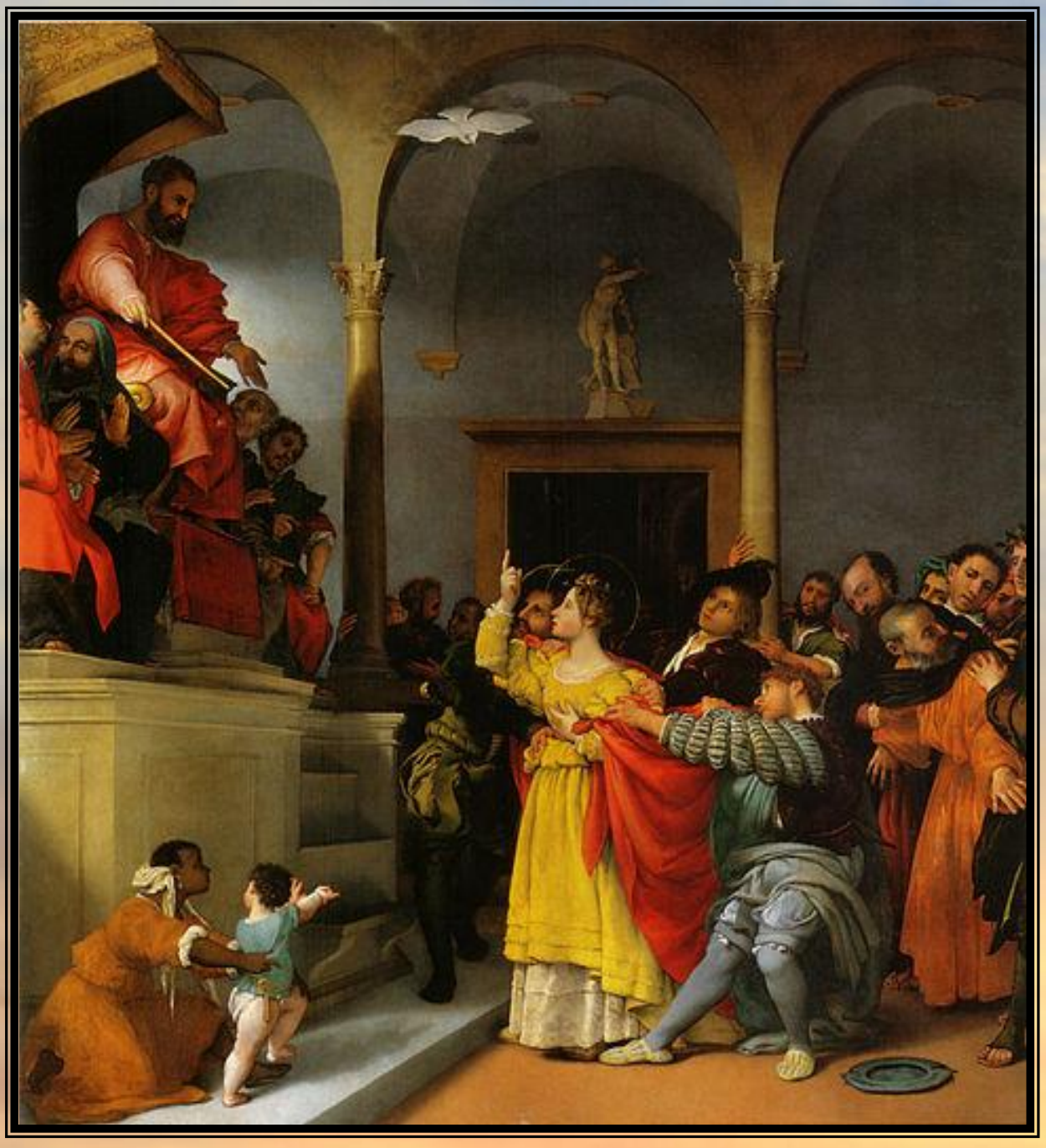

Saint Lucy of Syracuse

Saint Lucy of Syracuse

Patroness of the Blind
&
Those with Eye Problems

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Patroness of the Blind & Those with Eye Problems

PRAYER TO SAINT LUCY

Saint Lucy, thy beautiful name signifies light.

By the light of faith which God bestowed upon thee, increase and preserve this light in my soul so I may avoid evil, be zealous in performing good works, and abhor nothing so much as the blindness and the darkness of evil and of sin.

By thine intercession with God, obtain for me perfect vision for my bodily eyes, the grace to use them for God's greater honor and glory and for the salvation of all men.

Saint Lucy, virgin and martyr, hear my prayers and obtain my petitions. Amen.

SAINT LUCY, VIRGIN, MARTYR--A.D. 304

Feast: December 13

[Abridged from her Acts, older than Saint Aldehelm, who quoted them in the seventh century.]

The glorious virgin and martyr, Saint Lucy (Santa Lucia), one of the brightest ornaments of the church of Sicily, was born of honorable and wealthy parents in the city of Syracusa and educated from her cradle in the faith of Christ. She lost her father in her infancy, but Eutychia, her mother, took singular care to furnish her with tender and sublime sentiments of piety and religion. Because of the early impressions Lucy received and the strong influence of divine grace, Lucy's natural disposition was toward only virtue. She was very young when she offered to God the flower of her virginity. This vow, however, she kept a secret and her mother, who was a stranger to it, pressed her to marry a young gentleman who was a pagan. Lucy sought occasions to hinder this design from taking effect.

Lucy's mother was visited with a long and troublesome flux of blood, under which she labored four years without finding any remedy by recourse to physicians. At length she was persuaded by her daughter to go to Catana and offer up her prayers to God for relief at the tomb of Saint Agatha. Saint Lucy accompanied her mother to the tomb and their prayers were successful.

Shortly thereafter, our saint disclosed to her mother her desire to devote herself to God in a state of perpetual virginity and to bestow her fortune on the poor. Eutychia, in gratitude, left her at full liberty to pursue her pious inclinations. The young nobleman, with whom the mother had agreed to his marrying her, came to understand this by the sale of her jewels and goods and distribution of the money raised from the sales to the poor. In his rage, he accused her before the governor, Paschasius, as a Christian. (The persecution of Diocletian was currently raging with the utmost fury.) The judge commanded the holy virgin to be exposed to prostitution in a brothel house, but God rendered her immovable, so the guards were not able to carry her. God also made her an over-match for the cruelty of the persecutors, in overcoming fire and other torments. After a long and glorious combat she died in prison of the wounds she received--about the year 304.

She was honored in Rome in the sixth century among the most illustrious virgins and martyrs, whose triumphs the church celebrates, as appears from the Sacramentary of Saint Gregory, Saint Bede, and others. Her festival was kept in England until the change of religion, as a holy day of the second rank, in which no work but tillage or the like was allowed. Her body remained at Syracusa for many years; but was at length translated into Italy, and thence by the authority of the Emperor Otho I to Metz, as Sigebert of Gemblors relates. It is there exposed to public veneration in a rich chapel of Saint Vincent's Church. A portion of her relics was carried to Constantinople and brought then to Venice, where it is kept with singular veneration. Saint Lucy is often painted with the balls of her eyes laid in a dish (perhaps her eyes were defaced or plucked out) though her present acts make no mention of any such circumstance. In many places her intercession is particularly implored for distempers of the eyes.

It is a matter of the greatest consequence what ideas are stamped upon the ductile minds of children, what sentiments are impressed upon their hearts, and to what habits they are first formed. Let them be inured to little denials both in their will and senses and learn that pleasures that gratify the senses must be guarded against and used with great fear and moderation, for by them the taste is debauched and the constitution of the soul broken and spoiled much more fatally than that of the body can be by means contrary to its health.

There are few “Lucys” nowadays among Christian ladies, because sensuality, pride, and vanity are instilled into their minds by the false maxims and pernicious example of those with whom they first converse. Alas! Unless a constant watchfulness and restraint both produce and strengthen good habits, the inclinations of our souls lean of their own accord toward corruption.

ANOTHER PRAYER TO SAINT LUCY

Patroness of the blind and of Those with Eye Problems

Relying on Thy goodness, O God, we humbly ask Thee, through the intercession of Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr, to give perfect vision to our eyes, that they may serve for Thy greater honor and glory.

Saint Lucy, hear our prayers and obtain our petitions. Amen.

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